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 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
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 FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

CD NO.

STAT

COUNTRY USSR  
 SUBJECT Economic - Construction materials  
 HOW PUBLISHED Daily newspaper  
 WHERE PUBLISHED Moscow  
 DATE PUBLISHED 18 May 1953  
 LANGUAGE Russian

DATE OF INFORMATION 1939 - 1955

DATE DIST. 24 Aug 1953

NO. OF PAGES 2

SUPPLEMENT TO  
 REPORT NO.

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SOVIET CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS INDUSTRY MAKES STRIDES,  
 BUT DOES NOT MEET BUILDING DEMANDS

According to P. Yudin, Minister of the Construction Materials Industry USSR, the industry has been making strides within recent years but still has not been able to keep pace with increased building demands.

Production of a number of new building materials has been mastered, particularly clearer and larger-sized polarized glass, ornamented glass, glass blocks and pipes, larger-sized pressed stained glass, and radiators for thin wall buildings. The production of wooden prefabricated houses has been increasing considerably.

However, in a number of rayons the lack of building materials has been holding up constructions. The cost of brick, tile, facing ceramics, and gypsum products remains enormous, while the quality of brick, glass, slate, sanitary-technical products, and other materials remains inferior.

Without exception, all branches of the construction materials industry could make more efficient use of their enormous available reserves. However, in a number of plants of the industry, the equipment is not utilized to full capacity. Investigations have shown that the cement industry could increase its output by 30-40 percent with minimum effort.

Labor productivity could be increased considerably by mechanizing the working operations. However, in a number of enterprises products are still hauled within and between plant shops by unmechanized facilities. The operations in the warehouses are performed by manual labor. Quite frequently, more workmen are employed in the servicing and subsidiary plant shops than in the basic producing shops.

A number of plants have been permitting production to decline during the first 10 days of the month below the level of production of the last 10 days of the previous month. Cement, brick, li., and ceramic, slate, and sanitary-technical products are manufactured in spurts rather than in

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continuity. To liquidate the irregularity of operations and to assure that the daily quotas will be fulfilled systematically, the enterprises will have to eliminate the large losses resulting from defective products and give the building projects more building materials. If the requirements of the population are to be met, the construction materials industry will have to increase its output of building materials considerably.

In 1953, a considerable increase will be made in the manufacture of a greater assortment of high quality building materials for sale to the public. Plants subordinate to the Ministry of Construction Materials Industry USSR alone will manufacture more than 1.5 billion rubles' worth of materials for sale to the public. The public will have the opportunity to purchase through trading organizations more than one third of the slate, 40 percent of the window glass, and 25 percent of the soft roofing material manufactured. The assortment of building materials put out into the open market has been expanded. In addition to the basic building materials, the population can now purchase cement, ceramic slabs, asbestos-cement pipe, and various other building articles.

In 1953, the variety of building materials is 10 times greater than that of the prewar period. The industry is now faced with meeting the demands of builders for higher quality products and an even greater assortment of building materials.

Capital investments allocated during the new Five-Year Plan for reconstructing existing plants and erecting new plants within the industry provide for an expansive program three times greater than that in the Fourth Five-Year Plan. However, the builders erecting the industry's enterprises have been fulfilling their assignment very slowly.

The construction materials industry has been lacking a considerable amount of equipment and mechanisms. Despite this, their production by the machine building ministries is still not organized satisfactorily. It is imperative that the machine building ministries not only design new machinery for the manufacture of building materials but increase its output as well as improve its quality.

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